

The Croxley Green Resident

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

No. 92

Editor—Mr. F. N. CHERRILL

No. 1—JANUARY 1967

A Happy New Year to all our Readers

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Reader,

The Annual General Meeting of the Association is behind us once again, when last year's Committee was re-elected almost en bloc. Their names, together with those of two new Committee members, will be found in this issue. A larger attendance of members would have given greater encouragement to the Officers of the Association, but nevertheless those present had the opportunity of meeting the solitary member of Rickmansworth Urban District Council in attendance, Councillor Crawley, who represents the North Ward. Among the subjects discussed was that of the possibility of some arrangement for the regulation of vehicle parking in New Road.

The recent announcement that the Association of Public Analysts is collaborating with local organisations in a full scale survey to establish if food is being contaminated by the pesticides that are sprayed on crops, highlights the desire of a growing number of persons to produce as much as possible of their own food. This work is complementary to that being carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture Advisory Committee, and the announcement comes at the same time as the report that the findings and recommendations of the Government Committee on Allotments (under the Chairmanship of Professor Harry Thorpe of Birmingham University) are soon to be published. They are likely to be quite revolutionary.

At present Local Authorities have an obligation to provide allotments and to co-opt interested individuals to the Committee of the Council elected to establish and maintain them. Enthusiasm for allotments varies widely among local authorities. For instance in Oxford and Watford, where conditions are good and the necessary facilities made available, the Council evidently fulfils its obligations to allotment-holders. No doubt the lack of interest shown by Rickmansworth U.D.C. is due to the absence of allotment-holders among its membership. In today's affluent society it is not so much £-s.-d. which causes people to indulge their leisure activities in this healthy but nevertheless energetic exercise; the formation of the above mentioned Committee emphasises the national concern about the possible effects of the indiscriminate use of chemicals in food production.

A Local Authority may, if it so desires, spend the product of a 2d. rate on Allotments. In Rickmansworth this would run into thousands of pounds, or a sum equivalent to that spent on all the Open Spaces in the Urban District. The R.U.D.C. Abstract of Accounts for the five years, 1960-1964 shows that in the three years 1960 to 1963, after the meagre running costs of £325 had

been met, £331 was ploughed into the General Rate Fund from the rents of Allotment Holders. In 1964 the G.R.F. was called upon to the tune of only £55, principally to defray the cost of an additional water supply point at the Barton Way site. Incidentally, for the greater part of this summer when most needed, this supply has been "off".

There are in the Urban District, I know, a number of vacant plots, but these, I suggest, could be made more attractive to potential tenants by a phased plan of improvements, similar to that which exists for the Aquadrome, where many thousands of pounds will be spent. Nothing so elaborate as Oxford's concrete driveways for manure lorries, perhaps, merely a gradual consolidation of the tracks, possibly by means of spent highway materials. Watford Borough provides a key to each tenant for the locked gates which provide genuine security to their sites. No doubt some Croxley tenants would be quite pleased to see a new gate, and tenants of the Croxley Hall Wood site would welcome definite news of their security of tenure.

I conclude with the following extracts from the minutes of the Allotments Committee of R.U.D.C. held on 6th September, 1966, and I feel that they speak for themselves:—

"THE NATIONAL ALLOTMENT AND GARDEN SOCIETY LTD.

Meeting of Local Authority Representatives

16. The Clerk of the Council reported that the above Society has requested that the following resolution passed at the Annual Conference recently held at Weston-Super-Mare be placed before the committee:

Local Authorities spend a decimal part of 1d. of the permissible 2d. rate. Conference urges the Central Government, Local Authorities, all methods of publicity and all who will listen that allotments merit greater consideration, and that improvement in fencing, pavilions, water supply, sanitation, etc., is long overdue. The confidence of the allotment holders in their security of tenure would thus be strengthened, with the added incentive to younger men to cultivate an allotment garden.

Resolved: NO ACTION.

AFFILIATION

17. Arising from a letter from the Secretary of the National Allotment and Garden Society Ltd., the Committee considered an invitation to become affiliated to the Society.

Resolved: NO ACTION",

Yours sincerely,

L. V. REASON

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POST OFFICES

The latest situation appears to be that the Residents' Association has precipitated an investigation into post office facilities in Croxley Green.

Arising from the proposal of the Watford Postmaster to close Pikes Stores sub-post-office and move the facilities to Waddington's shop in Baldwins Lane, the Rickmansworth Council were formally asked by the Postmaster for their observations. The Council has set up a panel consisting of Councillors Groves, Hall and Jones "to hold exploratory talks with the Head Postmaster on the subject of post offices in Croxley Green" (we quote from the Minutes). Councillors Hall and Jones are representatives of the Croxley Green Wards, although it is believed the latter now lives at Tring. Knowing that the Council would be formally asked for their observations, the Association decided to ask the Council for their support in reviewing the entire facilities in Croxley Green.

In case you do not know the problem, after the Crown P.O. was closed its facilities were moved into Moxley's shop. Since the beginning of October when the transfer took place, the Association has had a multitude of complaints about the general inefficiency of this sub-post-office. It is even said that people have preferred to go to the s.p.o. at Pikes Stores simply to get their needs more expeditiously.

Then came the news that the postmaster in charge of Pikes Stores (which has been a post office for over 30 years) had tendered his resignation. The Watford Postmaster claimed that this situation called for a review of the services in Croxley Green South and proposed closing Pikes Stores with a transfer of facilities to Baldwins Lane. This, he claimed, was what the Residents' Association had asked for some three years ago. He is only half correct. **We asked for an additional s.p.o. in lower Baldwins Lane—not one in lieu.**

The Association is pressing for a sub-post-office at The Green/Scots Hill because people in that area are now over half-a-mile from the nearest s.p.o.

We hear that someone is prepared to do the post office work at Pikes Stores, but the Watford Postmaster just doesn't want to know of it.

Your Committee has considered the problem at every meeting for several months. We have raised the matter several times with the London Postal Region Operations Branch, with the Postmaster-General, and with our M.P., Mr. Gilbert Longden, who is most interested.

Many of our readers still expect to see a good parade of shops with a permanent Post Office on the land at the junction of New Road/Watford Road/Winton Drive, and we still do not know if this land is Crown property. Your Association is determined to have a permanent Post Office in Croxley Green, and our efforts will be pressed for this.

The Association thanks the Advertisers for their support and hopes all our readers will patronise them. We are grateful to our voluntary distributors who ensure that this publication is the only one to reach every house in Croxley Green.

FOOTPATH TO BE LIT

The footpath from Copthorne Road to Green Lane is to have two new lights costing £55 for which a supplementary estimate has been sanctioned so that the work can be carried out at once.

PARKING IN NEW ROAD

May we make a special request to everyone who has occasion to park his car or lorry in New Road to do so in such a way that it is not likely to prove an obstruction for the free movement of traffic. In other words do not park opposite another parked vehicle. Readers are also reminded that it is an offence to park within 15 yards of a road junction so that to do so at Barton Way/New Road is illegal. If we, as a community, do not heed this situation (particularly near the Fox and Hounds) then the inevitable "No Waiting" signs are likely to raise their ugly heads in New Road. We don't want this.

DUMB-BELLS AT CASSIO BRIDGE

The revised lay-out of the Cassio Bridge reconstruction can be seen in the Public Library until the end of January. Instead of a kidney-shaped island at the junction of Watford Road and Baldwins Lane, this will now be a roundabout; with a similar roundabout adjacent to the fire station the whole plan looks like a dumb-bell. The altered lay-out resulted from the Public inquiry a year ago when the Association evidently proved the planners to be wrong in their ideas for the Baldwins Lane junction.

HOPE IT WASN'T YOU!

A dustman described his experiences in a newspaper recalled one dustbin that was exceptionally heavy yet appeared to contain the usual rubbish. When he had emptied it in the lorry he noticed that the bottom of the dustbin had been covered in concrete! apparently to seal the holes in the base.

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Officers and Committee of the Association were re-elected: Col. C. E. Rothery Moss as President; Mr. L. V. Reason as Chairman; Mr. J. W. Broome as Treasurer; and Mr. F. N. Cherrill as Secretary. The Committee has two new members: Mr. L. L. Dobby (11 The Green), and Mr. W. W. Rutherford (Flat 3, The Grove).

After the formal business the meeting discussed problems of parking in New Road; they declined a proposal for affiliation to the Local Government Reform Society, and gravel excavations at Great Westwood Estate (arising from which it was decided to make a donation to the funds of the newly-formed Chandlers Cross Residents' Association). Councillor Crawley spoke to members describing many items where he was making determined efforts.



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GRAVEL EXCAVATION INQUIRY

The Association has been very concerned with proposals for the excavation of gravel at Great Westwood Estate, a planning application for which was refused by Watford R.D.C. which has now been the subject of an Inquiry. The Press has explained the unfortunate position of residents at Chandlers Cross who have formed a Residents' Association to brief Counsel to make their position clear at the Inquiry. Our Association realised that the land is away from Croxley Green, but we are aware that lorries would undoubtedly use such roads through Croxley Green as would lead to places southwards. It then became known that not only did the planners wish to obtain gravel, but with water also, they intended to have a ready-mixed concrete plant for which 20-ton lorries would be used in its transport. Our approach to Rickmansworth Council brought the reply that they thought Watford R.D.C. had sound grounds for rejecting the application and that local evidence would already have been covered. We are grateful to Mr. J. W. Broome who was able to attend the Inquiry and for giving oral observations.

HOW MUCH IS A PEPPERCORN ?

"The District Valuer had reached agreement with the developers (of the Northern Relief road) and recommended a rent of one peppercorn for the first year of the lease . . . and thereafter a rent of £1,650 per year."

(from the Council Minutes, page 25)

321 AND 385A BUSES

Route 321: On Saturdays two out of seven early morning journeys between 7.20 a.m. and 8.20 a.m. from Croxley and Luton will be withdrawn, i.e. those leaving Croxley at present at 7.50 and 8.20 a.m. On Sundays there will be three buses per hour (instead of four) in the afternoons on the St. Albans/Croxley route.

Route 385A: On Mondays to Fridays and on Saturdays the service will be reduced by one bus per hour between Croxley Green and Garston. There will be slight repercussions on the service to the Berry Lane Estate which will cause revised timings, and at times in the middle of the day there will be a reduction of one bus in three.

Route 336B: Some journeys on Sundays will be withdrawn, and others will be extended from Amersham to Little Missenden. This service calls at Mount Vernon Hospital.

London Transport intend to implement these changes from 31st December, 1966.

CARRIAGEWAY AT THE GREEN

The accepted tender for the surfacing of the carriage-way will cost £6,601 12s. 6d. and, subject to loan sanction being obtained, the work will be put in hand.

SHOPS IN CROXLEY GREEN

A post-war planner advocated three shops for each 100 of the population, and as Croxley Green has a population of over 10,000 we are sadly underserved for shops.

Makes you wonder how shop premises can be left empty for so long. The former butchers in Watford Road, vacant for about two years, was once intended to become a betting shop; it now appears that somebody is going to use the shop again. The former library shop is, we hear, going to be taken over by Mrs. Penney's furnishing shop. Carr's of Rickmansworth is coming to New Road, but we hear delays mean this will not happen before next March. The former Post Office building is empty; what is its future? The Westminster Bank has an interest in an empty shop in New Road; could this mean we might have two Banks before long?

A "MOST PURPOSE" AUTHORITY ?

The submissions of Watford Borough Council to the Royal Commission on Local Government advocate embracing Bushey, Rickmansworth, Chorleywood and Watford Rural District, in to a South West Herts Authority. If you have any views on this please let us know.

THE RECORD SEEKER

Did 16-year-old John Andrews of Warwick Way succeed in setting up a record for travelling 500 miles on London's Underground trains in one day? He reckons this will cost him 15s.!

ARE YOU AN HON. SEC. ?

If so, the Editor would like to have names of the Officers of your Society/Organisation. "The Croxley Green Resident" offers you space to announce coming events and reports of your activities. The magazine is normally published early in January, April, July and October, so that copy should reach the Editor about four weeks earlier.

WHERE HAS IT GONE ?

During October I met a man who lives in Hampstead Garden Suburb, and he was telling me of the prominent citizens (such as the Prime Minister) who live there (or have lived there). And he was saying that for years they have had a sub-post-office where customers have always had to queue for service. But now he was proud to say that the s.p.o. had just been replaced by a permanent POST OFFICE. So! If Croxley Green has lost its Crown Post Office at least we know where it has gone!

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A HOUSING PROBLEM

Sir,—In these days of suggested reform of Local Government is it not time that the widely differing methods of housing used by each Authority was looked into. Here, in Rickmansworth, for example, a point system is used which appears to be secret, and has anonymity of the applicant, so that the entire responsibility of housing rests on the shoulders of the Housing Manager. With this method it frequently appears that there are injustices but because of secretiveness and anonymity, no one really knows.

Watford Borough, Watford Rural, and Bushey all have different methods. It is said that smaller Councils cannot adopt similar methods to that of the size of Watford Borough in case it might become a 'family affair', but so far as I can see there might more easily be queue jumping in a large borough without it being noticed, than in an Urban District the size of Rickmansworth. During the period of a more varied Council, which at that time included two 'Residents' councillors, a different method of selecting applicants for Council houses was almost realised. Does this reflect on our Councillors? Or on those who elect them?

Yours, Mrs. H. E. Towner.

MAFEKING

Not many of us remember the battles of the Boer War, but there will be more of us who have noted the demolition of Mafeking Terrace in New Road. These houses have been empty for a long time, and the Association has been in communication with the Council to ascertain why they could not be made habitable. Apparently they were in a bad state and it was better to have them replaced with new buildings.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

Watford R.D.C. has resolved ". . . the Council's general expenses in the forthcoming financial year should not exceed the equivalent of the current financial year's expenditure".

BARCLAYS BANK

News has just been received that the sub-branch of Barclays Bank will open in New Road on January 9th.

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A CONSUMER GROUP FOR CROXLEY GREEN

(by Michael Williams)

Failure, stark failure, that was what glowered out of the pages of "The Croxley Green Resident" at Tony Shapps, Publicity Office of the Watford and District Consumer Group. Somebody was actually suggesting that Croxley Green should have a local Consumer Group, after all his efforts to publicise the fact that Croxley Green has got one of the best known Groups in Britain, which means the world! True, that important region is not mentioned specifically in the Group's title, but then neither are Bushey, Radlett, Hemel Hempstead, and many other places with plenty of civic pride which are happy, just for once, to be "and District" to Watford. Well, we managed to stop Tony, who lives in Croxley Green himself, from shooting either himself or your editor, but it seemed that a note to your very own magazine would be useful to let many local residents know that they could join a local Consumer Group for only 10s. a year (or 12s. 6d. covering husband and wife).

With a subscription as low as that you still want to know what the Group does? That must mean you are thoughtful about money, which is as good a reason as any for joining! No, we are not a means of getting discounts, but if you were seriously interested in local discounts we could all get together and find out who gives how much. As a matter of fact, we have already given our members information about some nationally available discount schemes in recent issues of our magazine "Sentinel". The magazine may have caught your eye in "Town and Around" in its many appearances there since the Group started operations in 1961; possibly you may have noticed references in "Sentinel" in the local press, too. Of course, the ladies of the Greensleeves Club will know all about this because our famous secretary, Alma Williams, has talked to them about the work of the Group.

We are an independent group of people living in and around Watford, who have got together in a non-profit-making society (that part is the easiest, not making a profit) to act as an improved "grapevine" on consumer affairs. As a Group we can find out local facts much more easily than any individual, however keen, working alone. We pool our knowledge on how to find those elusive tradesmen whom you may not need often, but whom you may need badly someday. We report on the district's invasion by racketeers. Do you remember the newspaper and television reports of the magazine salesman posing as a needy student? We were the first to spot this, when Alma asked one what college he was at—he didn't know.

The Consumer Group also carries out surveys of prices and quality, often arranging informative and sometimes hilarious lectures (you wouldn't believe how many laughs you can get out of guarantees). There are also local discussions in this area.

All this, and advice from Beryl Shapps (resident in Croxley Green) about your complaints is thrown in free. To join, just post your subscription to Mrs. June Hollands, 30. Nascot Wood Road, Watford. Looking forward to hearing from YOU.

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THE CROXLEY GREEN SOCIETY

The A.G.M. will be held on 30th January.

On St. Valentine's evening, at the Welcome Club at 8 o'clock, a talk with slides will be given by Mr. Cornwall on "The Story of Croxley Green". The evening will include a Cheese and Wine Party.

THE REVELS 1967

Note the day—3rd June, 1967. The Secretary of the Croxley Green Society (Mrs. Hauck, 335 New Road) with her committee has already embarked on preparations, and they propose a full day's entertainment in which they hope all Croxley Green organisations and societies will participate. Please—everyone—think and decide what your contribution will be, and send your suggestions to Mrs. Hauck.

ONCE UPON A TIME . . .

(Not long ago) there was a Councillor who was keen to get things done so he wrote to people in his constituency asking them for complaints and suggestions which he would submit to the Council. But—there was a Town Clerk in charge of the Town Hall. The Town Clerk wrote to the Fairy Councillor saying "that if any such letter was contemplated you should contact me first. Councillors are not pillar-boxes for complaints. The correct procedure is for ratepayers and/or Council house tenants to complain and have their complaints properly registered at the Town Hall. If any ratepayer or tenant is then unable to obtain satisfaction from those offices, then he may approach a Councillor."

Comment: Town Clerks should be reminded that they are public servants employed by the local authority and paid from locally provided monies. It is this sort of situation which gives the impetus for Residents' and Ratepayers' Associations to keep on keeping on. If a Local Authority did not have to be continually prodded to get things done, or if the L.A. did not have a consistent policy of saying "No" to well-founded suggestions then a situation would develop so that Residents' Associations such as ours might no longer serve a useful purpose. Until that time, however, we shall continue in a united way to maintain a watch over the doings of our local Council.

HELP NO. 1

If you live in Grove Crescent would someone like to offer to deliver about 60 copies of "The Croxley Green Resident" to their neighbours on four occasions a year? Please contact Mr. Broome (114 Links Way) or the Editor. As you know we are always grateful to those people who distribute this magazine but people do come and go. If, therefore, you have not in the past received your copy perhaps you would like to offer to help us with distribution.

HELP NO. 2

Collecting Association subscriptions is something of a problem and we often feel that we have not been able to call at every house in Croxley Green. Fortunately one person has done a terrific amount of work in this direction. We would welcome help to cover two areas: (a) Kenilworth Drive, Links Way and surrounding roads; (b) Watford Road, Sycamore Road, Valley Walk, and surrounding roads; (c) Watford Road, Frankland Road and surrounding roads. This is a rewarding job which could usefully be undertaken by a retired person able to call on residents during the evenings from Easter onwards. Please contact Mr. Broome (114 Links Way).

HELP NO. 3

The Hon. Secretary would welcome someone to take over the Editorship of "The Croxley Green Resident".

HELP NO. 4

Would you like to serve as a Councillor? The Association will consider sponsoring a lady or gentleman to stand in next year's municipal elections for the North Ward or the South Ward of Croxley Green. Our aim is to get *independent* Councillors on Rickmansworth Council. We believe there are a good many folk in Croxley Green who could do justice to this position, so if you are interested please telephone Mr. L. V. Reason to talk it over.

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